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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3938  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 6029  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3723  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3582  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 4271  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1336  
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 4210  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 001635

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN

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TAGS: [PREF PHUM PGOV SOCI UN TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: PROJECTS TO HELP REFUGEES STILL NEEDED

REFS: A) ASHGABAT 1607; B) ASHGABAT 1623

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for Public Internet.

12. (U) On December 16 the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) jointly with the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), briefed a donors meeting about achievements from the project "Improvement of the Quality of Reproductive Health and Social Services for Refugees and Host Communities." This was a three-year project funded by the Japanese government-supported UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS). UNICEF, the Government of Turkmenistan, the National Women's and Youth Organizations, and local NGO Keik Okara were partners in the project. (NOTE: The Japanese Government established UNTFHS in March 1999 and since then has contributed approximately \$279.7 million to it. The Trust has supported more than 160 UN agency projects on human security. END NOTE.)

13. (U) According to the UNHCR's Country Representative Brita Helleland and Associate Program Officer Marat Atamuradov, this most recent project worked to enhance the quality of reproductive healthcare and better access to social services for new citizens, refugees and their host communities. The project partners implemented up-to-date reproductive health protocols, installed water pumps, upgraded existing water systems, rebuilt roads, and refurbished and constructed medical aid posts. They also ran vocational training workshops and conducted reproductive health training. More than 40,000 Afghan refugees and Tajik former refugees, who are now naturalized citizens of Turkmenistan, in 25 remote settlements in Mary, Lebap and Ahal provinces, benefited from the \$1.2 million project.

14. (U) One of UNHCR's long-term goals is to integrate the refugees into their local communities. According to Atamuradov, the proportion of the refugees to local residents in these host communities is 50:50. Most of the refugees are ethnic Turkmen who fled from Tajikistan and Afghanistan in early nineties. Atamuradov said that commonalities in language and culture made the integration smooth.

15. (SBU) COMMENT: Although the Government of Turkmenistan does not often publicly talk about refugees, there are still refugees in the

country who need assistance (refs A and B). The refugees and host communities welcomed the assistance provided under this UNHCR/UNFPA project and are looking forward to new projects, especially those that would help them generate income. END COMMENT.

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